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or instinct. No recognized representative of any great corporate interest has **any** chance of election to any official position of high trust and honor, if he must depend on the popular vote to reach it. Why this widespread spirit of antagonism to corporations? Because, as a rule, corporations have not regarded the privileges accorded to them by legislation as public trusts, nor themselves as public servants, but have exercised the power of **taxation** without representation conferred upon them by **charter** in the most selfish and despotic spirit regardless of the public interest. What is the remedy? Clearly that no special privileges shall hereafter be granted to individuals; that all laws shall be general laws; that "private bills" shall be utterly abolished, and that wherever any business by its very nature demands a monopoly—as railroads, and telegraphs—then that that business shall either be exclusively performed or effectively curtailed by the State. There is no socialism in this demand—now made by nearly all the labor organizations in this country, and it is noteworthy that the cry of "centralization" raised against it comes exclusively from the servants or beneficiaries of corporations, or from the Rip Van Winkles of the Chair, whose political philosophy is founded on those facts of the last century and of a practically extinct civilization.

Every civilized nation in the world except the United States owns its telegraph system, and everywhere the telegraph system is conducted better and at less cost to the public than in the United States. Here we are absolutely helpless against the impositions of a small group of monopolists, for there is no effective competition possible in telegraphing. It should be an adjunct to the post office, which, as experience has shown, is done more cheaply, and with greater perfection of business methods, than *any* private business in the country. Why should millions be annually needlessly drawn from the people to enrich individuals when the telegraph could be managed at cost and more efficiently by the Government? If this suggestion is "socialistic," then the governments of all Europe are socialistic to this extent.

Government or postal saving banks have also been established by England, Belgium, France, Italy, Holland, and in India, Canada and the Argentine Republic, and they have been productive of infinite good to the working classes in promoting savings. A similar system has been advocated by the Senior Senator of New York, and a bill introduced into Congress to establish it. Let it pass.

HENRY MELROSE.

## X.

### A SIGN OF THE TIMES.

It seems hitherto to have escaped the attention of philosophers who like to speculate upon social phenomena and the thousand and one manifestations of social evolution, their effects and causes, drawing all manner of strange and curious deductions from what they see or imagine—it seems to have escaped these gentry that in the very popular and widespread use of aerated waters we have an illustration of popular feeling, and an instructive sign of the times. People like these bubbling waters because their effervescence lends a certain life and freshness to what might otherwise be insipid and ordinary; and this liking is only a manifestation of the same spirit, which finds life itself flat, stale, and unprofitable, if it be not agitated and eventful, even though the agitation and eventfulness are wholly due to artificial causes.

The tastes and habits of people speak more truly of their characters than whole libraries of volumes of speculative philosophy, and when we find a new trade brought into existence by a popular demand, and not due to any new discovery in the sciences and arts, we may at once be sure that the characteristics of

such a people have in some way changed from the characteristics of their ancestors. Our grandparents knew of aerated waters, and some of them visited at and imbibed from those natural aerated fountains which bubble up from the earth in all parts of the world; and chemistry had also reproduced these springs. But in spite of this knowledge aerated water was not a popular drink. Our ancestors were too steady and sober-minded to like this artificial titillation of the palate. The manufacture of the soda-water fountain and the aerated siphon was left to our less contented and novelty-loving age—left, until the desire for something exciting, something new, became a national characteristic—left to a generation which objects to water, and to life itself, unless impregnated with artificial flavor, and artificially pumped full of something that causes it to seethe and bubble.

GEOFFREY CHAMPLIN.